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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 07/09/07-2

(3) Farm Minister Akagi's office expenses scandal, Support
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ARTICLES:

(3) Farm Minister Akagi's office expenses scandal, Support
association president revises statement

YOMIURI ONLINE (Full)
July 9, 2007 2:34 pm

Regarding the office expenses scandal involving Farm Minister
Norihiro Akagi's political organization "The Norihiro Akagi Support
Group," the president of the group, a former Ibaraki prefectural
assembly member, stated in an interview with Yomiuri Shimbun
yesterday evening, "I have been the (support group) president since
(Akagi's grandfather and former Farm Minister) Munenori Akagi's
time, and I continue to remain in the position under Farm Minister
(Norihiro) Akagi. It just happened naturally."

Initially, the former assembly member said, "I learned that I was listed as the (support group) president after receiving inquiries from the media. I want an explanation (from Akagi)."

The scandal revolves around the registration of Akagi's parents' home in Chikusei City, Ibaraki Prefecture as the "main office" of the support group. At first, Akagi's parents stated, "We didn't receive any money for rent or utility costs. Private secretaries and office staff come before elections, but they are not here on a continuous basis." Yesterday, however, they released a statement explaining, "(The house) still functions as the base for local operations."

(4) Local expectations subside with Defense Minister Koike's rejection of Futenma revision talks

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Pages 26, 27) (Abridged slightly)
July 7, 2007

Yuriko Koike has come back to the political spotlight, replacing gaffe-prone Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma. In a press conference immediately after taking office, new Defense Minister Koike declared that the realignment of US forces in Japan was her top priority, rejecting Okinawa's call for making changes to the Futenma Air Station relocation plan. It was a disappointment to Okinawa.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe appointed Koike, who had served as state minister in charge of Okinawa affairs, as new defense minister on July 3. Hearing the news, Mayor Yoshikazu Numabukuro of Nago, the relocation site for Futenma Air Station, commented high-spiritedly on the same day: "She seems to be keenly aware of Okinawa's situation." A similar mood enveloped the city assembly, as well.

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The mood entirely changed with Koike's inaugural press conference the following day.

Koike, while referring to the subject of US force realignment as her top priority, simply turned down Okinawa and Nago's proposal to construct V-shaped pair of runways further offshore than the currently planned, citing time constraints.

Okinawa's revision plan is designed to shift the government's plan to build a V-shaped pair of airstrips on the coastline of Camp Schwab several hundred meters further out to sea. Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima also expressed his support for the revision plan presented by Nago this January.

Koike's news conference drew a negative reaction from Nago City Assemblyman Takashi Nagayama, who is supportive of the Futenma relocation plan:

"I had high hopes for Ms. Koike, who seemed considerate of Okinawa and is close to Prime Minister Abe. But she brushed off the revision plan without talking to prefectural and city representatives."

Koike's predecessor, Kyuma, used both hard and soft approaches in dealing with Okinawa. For instance, he angered Washington by saying: "The US must not make high-handed remarks. I've been in talks with the governor, so the US must wait for a while. The US must leave Japanese affairs to Japan." At the same time, he sent a Maritime Self-Defense Force minesweeper tender to waters near Henoko to assist in the government's preliminary environmental survey. Koike appeared to be a person with stronger will than Kyuma in the eyes of some observers.

One of them is Yoshitami Oshiro, an anti-base city assemblyman, who took this view:

"Ms. Koike is the most faithful practitioner of the Abe administration's hawkish policy. She is expected to press ahead with the Japan-US agreement more forcibly than Mr. Kyuma did, ignoring local voices. The marine habitat for dugongs, other rare species, and the local living environment would be destroyed. She might

implement the plan without prior consultations with local authorities, citing a lack of time."

Sakae Toyama, secretary general of the peaceful citizens' liaison committee, also reacted unexcitedly to Koike's appointment:

"During her tenure as environment minister, she even didn't try to halt the drilling survey. She has no awareness that the government is forcing US bases on Okinawa. She would just act out what is told by the prime minister. Nothing would change. Her image that she is amiable and flexible is running ahead of her. In reality, she lacks independent perceptive and is elusive. She is the kind of person who is difficult to deal with and find a settlement line."

Former Nago Mayor Yutoku Toguchi commented:

"I hoped she would show some flexibility about making changes to the relocation plan. To my disappointment, she flatly ruled out revision talks. I knew right then that nothing would change. I think she will just work hard to implement the government's plan."

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Tensions have been running high between the Okinawa anti-base group and the survey firm over the preliminary survey that started on May 18 to study the living conditions of coral and dugons in waters off Camp Schwab.

Even after the MSDF minesweeper tender left Okinawa, anti-base protesters have been trying to block activities by some 20 research boats by mobilizing canoes everyday except for weekends.

A new problem has arisen in Okinawa -- a relocation of the helipad due to the planned partial return of the Northern Training Area to Japan.

Helipad construction began on the morning of July 3 in the area near the Takae district in Higashi Village. The Naha Defense Facilities Administration Bureau (DFAB) did not notify Higashi Village and other affected municipalities about the helipad relocation until after construction work began at 9:00 a.m. The government's step that had kept the village and the district in the dark has drawn local voices of resistance.

According to the DFAB, construction for the 45-meter-diameter helipad is scheduled to be completed at the end of February 2009. The construction site encircles residential areas that are dotted with dams. Once the helipad is built, US forces may conduct survival training at places closer to residential areas instead of mountainous areas.

Although the village announced its acceptance of the helipad in 1999, how should such possible problems as environmental destruction and noise be settled? Mounting challenges are associated with the helipad project, as well.

Under such circumstances, will speed be still Koike's top priority?

Military commentator Motoaki Kamiura predicted Koike's steps this way:

"Although she is not a military or security professional, Ms. Koike has a lot of nerve and aggressiveness. To the United States, she might be an easy negotiation partner. She ruled out revision talks, but that must be a show. I believe she eyes settling the issue in the end by shifting the envisaged runways slightly further out to sea. She will let Okinawa local chiefs to score some points with minor revisions and eventually settle the issue with money."

Military journalist Tetsuo Maeda took this view:

"As state minister for Okinawa affairs, her job was to lend an ear to voices in Okinawa. But now, as defense minister, he job is to implement the US force realignment plans based on the Japan-US agreement. She has just assumed office amid strong criticism of Kyuma's forcible measures and growing distrust in the government due

to the reduced description on mass suicides in school textbooks. Although she is well-versed in Okinawa affairs, Koike has no experience in defense policy or defense administration. How is she going to deal with this volatile situation? In order for her to take a more Okinawa-oriented stance, she must review and make changes to the traditional policy while in Tokyo before visiting Okinawa. But she doesn't seem to have that much power or resolve. The outcome of the upcoming Upper House election might force Prime Minister Abe to reshuffle his cabinet, a step short of change in administration, and

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Koike as a result might become the shortest-serving defense minister."

(5) Great Tokyo Air Raids targeted civilians right from beginning: Book analyzing incident reprinted for first time in 17 years; New facts as told by prominent researcher of US military data

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 20) (Full)
July 9, 2007

The new edition of an analysis of the Great Tokyo Air Raids based on data compiled by the US military titled "Bomb Tokyo! -- US Military Operation Report" was published by Sanseido in late June after a 17-year hiatus. Shigeyoshi Okuzumi (83), the writer of the book, who lives in Hachioji City, Tokyo, added some details to the first edition of his book with the filing of a collective lawsuit by 112 victims of the air raids in March as the occasion.

The first edition was published in 1990, in which the author illustrated in detail six air strikes carried out from February through May 1945, obtaining the US military's tactical mission report (TMR) from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The book carried the full translation of the TMR on the Great Tokyo Air Raids on March 10, which reportedly left approximately several hundred thousand persons dead. Though it had been out of print, he decided this April to publish a new edition following the suggestion made by Katsumoto Saotome (75), the co-author.

Eighteen pages have been added, including litho-mosaic, aerial photographic maps used by mission crew in pinpointing targets. It was known that the US military data included figures, such as 055102, which remained undecipherable. However, Okuzumi found that if the figure divided into 055 and 102, they correspond to the scale on the maps. Okuzumi found out that crossover points of ordinate axes and axes of abscissas from the vertical and lateral scales indicated the targets of bombings.

According to litho-mosaic, four aiming points of bombings carried out on March 10 were all located in densely populated residential areas (approximately 290,000 square kilometers) along the Sumida River. Five sketches drawn by crew of B-20 bombers are evidence to the fact that the US military targeted this area from the beginning.

What is of interesting is data concerning fire bomb attacks on Japan compiled in Oct. 1943, eight months before first air strikes on the mainland Japan. The data noted that 20 cities vulnerable to fire bomb attacks were made the targets of bombings, where houses of about 12 million people were burnt down and stockpiles and clothes were destroyed. According to Okuzumi, the report also carries the logic of the US, which reminds one of a stance it repeats regarding the dropping of atomic bombs, that is, fire bomb attacks would quickened Japan's surrender and saved the lives of many US soldiers.

These data will likely hold the key to finding out reasons why the US military switched from daytime factory strikes from high altitude to nighttime indiscriminately bombings from low altitude. It had been common belief that the judgment was made by Commander Curtis LeMay. However, Okuda takes the view that the target of the attacks was civilians even before the air strikes started.

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Okuzumi worked at a secret aircraft factory before the war. The factory developed a bomber that could fly to and from the B-29 base in Saipan and a large fighter plane to attack B-29 bombers. He said: "We were confident that we could fight back with those aircraft. However, the war ended after only one reconnaissance fight with the bomber and a test flight with the fighter plane. Even if those aircraft had been manufactured, Japan would have been defeated, because the US had more than 1,000 B-29 bombers."

In 1975, when he was teaching physics and mathematics at a high school, he had the opportunity to read the US military data for the first time at a meeting of the group to record air strikes on Hachioji. He then expanded the area of his research to US air strikes on major cities and small and medium cities from a civilian's perspective with the determination that somebody must do it, because scholars and historians were not doing that and the government was not encouraging.

Commenting on the reprinting of the book, Saotome said, "It is not until (data given by) those who attacked and (the data provided by) those who were attacked are collated that the atrocity of war is revealed. Even those who can read English cannot read encoded papers. Mr. Okuzumi, who was aircraft engineer, is the number one person for that job. The work of Mr. Okuzumi, who has been accustomed to remaining in the background, should be given high marks."

Mr. Okuzumi was hospitalized last summer due to poor health and became critically ill. He is continuing efforts to find new data with the thought that he would not have much time left for this work."

"Unlike Japanese data, the data compiled by the US military record everything, including mistakes it made. I think Japan fought a reckless war against too strong a country."

(6) Seiron (Opinion) column: Reason and emotion over debate on mass suicide in Battle of Okinawa

SANKEI (Page 13) (Excerpts)
July 6, 2007

Ikuhiko Hata, historian of contemporary history
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ikuhiko_Hata)

Array of emotional articles

June 23, 62 years ago, was the day, when an end was put to the Imperial Japanese Army's (IJA) organized resistance in the Battle of Okinawa with Commander Ushijima's suicide in a cave on a southern tip of the main Okinawa island called Mabuni.

Designating June 23 as "Memorial Day," Okinawa has since then held the memorial ceremony to console the souls of the 200,000 war dead, including 90,000 Japanese soldiers or army civilians, as well as 90,000 civilians, and some American soldiers. This year's ceremony took place when Okinawa was in confusion over the prefectural assembly's adoption of a resolution calling for the recovery of descriptions that "the military forced civilians into mass suicide" (in the Battle of Okinawa)," which had been removed as a result of the screening of history textbooks for senior high school students.

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Except for the Yomiuri Shimbun, which hardly paid any attention to the problem, every major daily in its editorials or city news pages devoted much space to it. War survivors have been treated with great care to date by the media and pundits, perhaps for their consideration for the hearts of Okinawa, and this year saw there was no change in this tendency, with excessively emotional and exclamatory articles centering on those survivors' experiences carried by many dailies. But most survivors were at age 10 or so when they experienced the war, so their testimony was not necessarily accurate.

For example, one prefectural assembly member who compiled the resolution was eight years old at the time. He was quoted by the Asahi Shimbun in its edition on June 23 as saying: "Together with some 200 other Okinawans, my family including myself hid in a trench. Three Japanese soldiers came to the trench and forced my family to have my three-year-old sister and my cousin, both crying, eat poisoned rice balls. Presumably, out of fear of the enemy noticing our existence, they urged my family to do so." This article, however, was somewhat unnatural. I wondered why the reporter of that article did not think so.

For instance, was it possible to have time to make poisoned rice balls amid the fierce battle? Was it possible for parents to give them to their children telling them they were poisonous? Without verifying at least those things, the reporter introduced that story. The reporter appears to be lacking the qualifications needed to be such.

Grenades for attack

In the prefectural assembly, the ruling and opposition blocs locked horns over the question of the existence of a military order on mass suicide. The opposition parties contended, "There must have been a military order for mass suicide," while the ruling parties insisted, "No such order seemed to be issued." By compromise, both sides agreed to issue a statement in the name of the prefectural assembly that "(Mass suicide) would not have occurred without the IJA's involvement," skillfully evading the point of contention.

The word "involvement" is taken by some to mean that the IJA's grenades were used for suicide, but grenades were supposed to be a valuable weapon for the IJA as evidenced by the fact that because of the shortage of weaponry, soldiers carried even bamboo spears to attack the enemy. Grenades were provided to defense corps members recruited in Okinawa (who were at the time regarded as soldiers) and used for family suicides. The former junior college president, who had been 16 years old in those days, related his experience to the Asahi Shimbun by saying, "Grenades embodied the order for (mass) suicide." Believing his story was a "woeful testimony," the Asahi Shimbun quoted it in its editorial on June 23. I cannot help doubting that daily's attitude.

Reason why no military order was found

The tone of most editorials, except for the one by the Asahi Shimbun, was calm. The Asahi Shimbun's editorial, however, stood out in its emotional descriptions. For instance, it wrote that the IJA did not allow civilians to be taken prisoners and warned them, "Anyone who attempt to surrender to the enemy should be shot to death," and did so, and that "The IJA led civilians to believe that

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women would suffer an insult and men would be killed in a cruel manner," if they were captured by the enemy. But all these descriptions were almost groundless.

Troops led by Commander Ushijima, after consultations with prefectural government officials, ordered civilians to evacuate to the mainland Japan or the northern part of the main island of Okinawa to keep them away from any area that was likely to turn into a battlefield. In the last phase of the battle, they instructed civilians to evacuate to the Chinen Peninsula, where no battles occurred, envisioning the possibility that they would be protected by the US army.

According to the US military's archives, some 280,000 civilians eventually surrendered to the US. Of them, some volunteered to go to a Japanese military's camp in order to advise Japanese soldiers to surrender, but they drew suspicions as a spy and were executed. Such a case was exceptional, however.

Around that time, I was a 12-year-old militarist boy and harbored hatred and fear against "brutal America and Britain." But I don't remember who indoctrinated me into believing that they were brutal. Neither my parents nor teachers did so. It might have been the Asahi

Shimbun or the female magazine Shufu no Tomo, which my family had subscribed to.

Even researchers have not been able to discover any military orders to prove mass suicide or forced recruitment of comfort women. However, there are still many who insist that such orders were all incinerated with the ending of the war or that (mass suicide or forced recruitment of comfort women) was attributable to the pre-war Emperor system or pre-war militarist education in spite of the lack of particular orders concerning mass suicide or forced recruitment of comfort women.

The Asahi Shimbun is similar for its editorial concluded that to insist that the to say that the IJA had nothing to do with it, despite the reality that there was mass suicide, would mean to again betray Okinawa.

SCHIEFFER